

THE  
C A S E

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O F

Sureties in Baptism.

In which is shewn, That

SCHISMATICKS

Ought not to be admitted as

Godfathers and Godmothers

In the Ministration of that

Holy Sacrament.

*By Mr. William Higden*

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THE HISTORY OF THE

CHRISTIAN FAITH



Godfathers and Godmothers

Holy Sacrament

NO. 100

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TO THE  
R E A D E R.

**T**HE Author of this Case of Conscience is a private person, but a Gentleman of Letters, who hath long been a sorrowful Spectator of the general carelessness, and neglect of the Clergy in observing the Rules, and Orders of the Church, by which they have exposed themselves, and our Religion to great Contempt, weakened the Interests, I mean the Spiritual Interests of it, and given their best Friends among the Laity of both Sexes great occasion of Offence, and their Enemies of all sorts, who are Observators upon them in all places, great advantage against their Order, and great occasion of reproaching it; though in truth it is only the obnoxious Men of the Order, and not the Holy Order that deserves the Reproach.

Among other Omissions, he hath long lamented in too many of them their scandalous dis-regard of the Church's Rules, and Rubricks, which concern the Ministration of Baptism, especially in the Parishes in, and about London, where for some Years he hath been an Observer of the many common Irregularities, for which so many of the Clergy are answerable to God and Man in the Administration of that Holy Sacrament. It grieves him to see them administer it in private Houses, without the cause of compelling necessity contrary to its nature, as a publick Institution, and the universal Practice, not only of the most ancient, and pure Churches, but of all the Churches, that now are in any part of Christendom, excepting the Church of England, and not in her neither till of late Years, when the Clergy began to sacrifice the pious Orders of the Church, with their own Authority, and Honour to their Interest, for which their enemies despise them, and in all Companies talk of it in such a manner,

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manner, as grieves their Friends to hear them, because they can neither defend, nor excuse them. What can be said to justify, or excuse the corrupt Practice of Baptizing the Children of the Poor at Church, and of the Rich at Home? The Reason is evident why so many of the Clergy do so, and Atheists, Deists, those Sons of Atheists, and all the Infidel Crew, that love to mis-call Priesthood, Priestcraft, make ill use of it, and speak of them in such Language, as the Love and Reverence I have for them, will not let me repeat.

Nay, the Ministers of the French and Lutheran Congregations among us, censure them for the obliquity, and partiality of this unchristian Practice, and will rise up in Judgment against them to condemn them for it, and to discourage it, as much as he can, our Author hath some Thoughts of writing a short discourse to shew the People the unlawfulness of all private Baptisms, excepting when necessity compels, but he had rather the Clergy, who wrote so many Cases for the sake of the Dissenters twenty Years ago, would prevent him, by writing some, that are now needful for their own People. This would be more for their Honour, than to let private Persons write them, and get the reputation of reforming their Flocks, which it is their true Interest to get themselves.

The Author of this Case, is one who wishes them the Monopoly of all the Praise of doing good, especially in reforming. He wrote it out of pure respect to them, as well as charity to their Flocks, having long laid to heart their too common practice of admitting Schismaticks to be Sureties in Baptism, nay, and Schismaticks, whom they often know to be such, and who sometimes happen to be Schismaticks of opposite Sects, and sorts. They are the private Christnings which are one great cause of these Irregularities. I have been told of one, in which one of the Godfathers was a Dissenter, the other a Papist, and the Godmother of the Church of England. I have heard of others, in which, for the sake of dissenting Sureties, the  
sign



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sign of the Cross hath been omitted, and of another, in which a Person of a Communion which cannot well be imagined, stood Godfather for a Child. But, besides the common use of private Christnings, which is one occasion of this scandalous Practice, there is another cause of the growth of it, and that is the corrupt custom of making Presents to Midwives, and Nurses, which makes Godfathers, and Godmothers of our Communion so difficult to be procured. When this ill Custom first came in, I cannot see, but I am sure it is now grown to such excess; that it deserves Censure, as well as private Baptism which truly deserves to be chastised with the Episcopal Rod. It is to be hoped, that when the Convocation meets, something will be done by way of Censure, to put a stop to both these Practices, which have already been the occasions of Prophaning the holy Ministration of Baptism, and brought such a scandal upon our Church.

The former Practice is so much in use, that a stranger, who liv'd some Months in a populous Parish, without seeing a publick Christning, asked if Children were baptiz'd in the Church of England, and truly those who make reflections upon the desuetude of publick Baptism among us, may very well think that the Clergy, and People do not like it, because they baptize so much in private, and love not to administer that Holy Sacrament, as its nature and dignity requires, in the Churches at Canonical hours of Publick Worship, but in higger-mugger without solemnity, and commonly without decency, at all hours, in any Chamber, the genial Chamber not excepted, in which † Christians of the primitive times, without necessity, would not perform their private Devotions.

The latter Practice is come to such an height, that modest Parents of the Church of England are often distressed to find such of their own Communion, as are willing to be Sureties for their Children, at the expence of the gifts which are expected upon those occasions, especially if the Parties asked have been Sureties at such expencee before.

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Wherefore since baptismal stipulation cannot be made without Sureties, and this corrupt Custom makes it difficult to procure them, it were to be wished, that good and exemplary People would no longer observe it, but endeavour to bring it into dis-use. Nay, it were to be wished in this Age of Societies, that they would form themselves into Societies against it, especially in populous Cities, for it occasions great confusion of Faithful, and Schismatical Sureties together in the ministration of Baptism, because it discourages the Faithful from doing their Duty in this instance of the greatest Charity, and therefore the reformation of such ill Customs as this, and private Baptisms, next to that of ill manners, would be for the honour and service of our Religion, the glory of God, and the unspeakable good of the Church.

I submit what I say with all reverence to our English Clergy, to whom our Author also submits his little Book, which he hath written against admitting Sureties of Schismatical Communions to stipulation in Baptism, which, as a Sacrament, is one of the most solemn acts of Worship that the Faithful can perform, and in which, by the Rules of Catholick Unity, they neither ought nor can have any communion with those, who cut themselves off from the Church. The Discourse is short, nervous, and perspicuous, even to common capacities, being written in the most plain, and familiar sort of stile, that the People of the Church might have the benefit of it, and that the modesty and plainness of it might encourage the Clergy to recommend it to their Flocks. To conclude, the great Irregularity against which it is written, is practised more or less all over the Kingdom, and it is hoped, that the Honourable Society for dispersing Christian Knowledge will take some notice of it, and help to disperse it in all places; for Christian Knowledge doth not only consist in knowing Christian Doctrines, but Christian Institutions, which concern the Polity, Orders, good Government, Rights, Discipline, and Unity of the Catholick Church. The Knowledge and Practice of  
these



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these things, ordinarily speaking, are also necessary to Salvation, and if the People in this Age of Latitude continue in Ignorance of them, their Priests must answer to God for it, and in the mean time thank themselves if they daily revolt from them, and think any Preachers as good as those of Episcopal Ordination; nay, if they think Episcopacy it self a needless, or an unlawful thing, and to communicate in a Conventicle as good and sure, or it may be a surer way to Heaven, than to hold Communion with the Church.

There is one thing more, which I cannot but recommend to our Clergy in relation to Sureties in Baptism, and that is, to let the People know, that as none are too great, so none are too low, or mean for that Holy Performance. To convince them of this, they must be told, that Christians, however different, and unequal in their civil ranks and qualities, yet as Christians are all equal in the Commonwealth of Israel, or community of the Catholick Church; in which there ought to be no difference, or respect of Persons, especially at the Font or Altar. The putting of a difference between Poor, and Rich in Church Assemblies, was that which St. James reprov'd in his general Epistle, and ought now to be reprov'd, especially in those who had rather have Sureties of any Religion, than take such as are in rank, or estate beneath themselves, tho' they are their Christian Peers, and with them Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. God, who is no respecter of Persons, but, in whose Eyes the poor and rich are equal, cannot but be offended with this Partiality, which proceeds partly from the most corrupt mercenary custom, I mention'd before, and partly from a vain affectation even in good People to have Godfathers and Godmothers for their Children of worldly note and character, which many times, in many places, and by many accidents are hard to be procured. It would be much more pleasing to God, and agreeable to their Christian Profession to choose the best Christians they can find, without regard to worldly quality, and to prefer the Poor, who are  
rich

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rich in Faith and Vertue, before the Rich, who are poor therein. Thus the ancient Greeks and Romans would rather choose in their last Wills and Testaments to make honest, and understanding Slaves Fiduciary Heirs, to whom they might commit their Children, and Estates, than the noblest, and greatest of the Common wealth, in whom they could not repose Trust. And as to the great Trust of Spiritual Suretiship, I think those Christians act most according to the Mind of God, their character as Christians, and the rules of Christian Prudence, who in choice of Sureties, who are Trustees for their Children, prefer their Inferiours, though they be Servants, or in other respects beneath them, if they are vertuous and faithful, before their equals or superiours, who tho', rich, and great in this World, are not so in Faith, and good Works. In this they will follow the example of the best Christians, in the best, and purest times, and as bad as this Age is, let them not doubt but that God will raise up others to follow their good Example to their comfort in this World, and their reward for their exemplary care, and piety in that which is to come.

*This Preface is said to be writ by*

*H. Hickes*

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Qu. May



## Qu. May a Priest admit a Person in Schism, to be Godfather, or Godmother to a Child?

**T**His Question may easily be resolved, by considering the Office or Duty of Godfathers and Godmothers; and we shall understand that better, if we first briefly consider the nature of *Baptism*.

Now *Baptism* is the admission of a Person into the Covenant of the Gospel; and as in all Covenants there are Parties, who mutually stipulate, so in this the Parties are, *Almighty God*, who graciously condescends, to admit his Creature into this Covenant with him, and on his part confers on him the great benefits of it: And the *Person to be baptised*, who on the other side engages to perform all the Conditions of it. But because God doth not visibly act in his Church, but by the Ministry of Men, the Priest by Commission from him, acts in his Name; and because Children by reason of their tender age cannot act for themselves, they especially have *Godfathers and Godmothers* appointed by the Church.

1. To present them to be Baptized.
2. To Stipulate, or Contract for them.
3. To take care of their Instruction and Education, according to the obligation of their Baptismal Vow.

First then, *Godfathers and Godmothers are appointed by the Church*: Which shews that *Schismatics* are not to be received; because the Church can never be supposed to have appointed them. For they having broken off their relation to her, and ceasing to be her Members, she hath no more to do with them, unless it be to endeavour to reduce them into her bosom by earnest Exhortations, or by charitable Censures; but she never calls them to any Office, or commits any trust to them, till they are restored; and if any of her Priests doth it, he exceeds his Commission, and is accountable to her, as will farther appear, if we consider those ends for which Sureties are appointed.

1<sup>st</sup>. To † present them to Baptism, that is, to be admitted into the Christian Society. But are those Persons who have themselves revolted from this Society, proper to present others to be admitted into it? At least can any Man believe that this Society would ever appoint them?

\* Vid. Rubrick before the the Office of baptism, and the 29<sup>th</sup> Canon.

*Accommodat illis Mater Ecclesia, aliorum pedes, ut veniant, aliorum Cor, ut credant, aliorum linguam, ut stipulent.* Aug. Serm. 10. de verb. Apostol.

*Offeruntur quippe Parvuli ad percipiendum Spiritualem gratiam non tam eis, quorum gestantur manibus, si ipsi boni fideles sunt, quam ab universa societate sanctorum atque fidelium.* Aug. Ep. 23.

† It is to the Godfathers and Godmothers that the Priest saith. Ye have brought this Child here to be baptized, has you may see in the Rubrick. And they are Respons. ad Orthodoxos.

called *νεοκατηχέμενοι* by the Author of

2dly. To stipulate with God and his Church for the performance of the conditions of this Covenant. This Contract always was, and is still made in a very solemn manner, by Question and Answer, according to the ancient forms of stipulation, as may be seen in the Office, and for this reason Godfathers and Godmothers were call'd *αὐτόδοχοι* by the Greeks, *Sponsores, susceptores,* and *fidei jussores* by the Latins, and *Sureties* by our Church in her Catechism. And

\* *Quicumque viri, quaecunque mulieres de sacro fonte filios spiritualiter exceperunt, cognoscant se pro ipsis fidei jussores apud Deum extitisse.* Sermon. de Temp. 116.

St. *Austin* in one of his Sermons tells all Godfathers and Godmothers, \* *that they were Sureties to God for their Godchildren.* Now, the conditions for the performance of which they are Sureties, are in three words, *Repentance, Faith, and Obedience.*

To pass over the first of these conditions, and come to *Faith*, which is the second. How can a Priest admit a Schismatick to be a *Surety* to God and his Church for the Child's *Faith*, whom he knows to err (practically) at least in two great

|| *Ἀξιωματικὸν τῶν διὰ τὸ βασιλικῶτος ἀγαθῶν τὰ ἴδια τὸ πρῶτον τῶν παρ' ἐκείνου.* Resp. ad Orthodox. Q. 56.

Articles of it, *The Holy Catholick Church, and The Communion of Saints*: Especially since, as an ancient Author saith, || *Children are esteemed worthy of the benefits of Baptism, for the Faith of those that present them to it.* The Priest however demands whether he believes these

*Articles, as well as the rest, and he answers that he steadfastly believes them all*; and yet it is evident that the Question understands them in one Sense, and the Answer is made in another; for, the Church, and her Minister, who puts the Question, understand them in the Catholick Sense, and the Schismatick answers in his own, that is, according to the Principles of his Schism. And if the Priest explain'd the Questions according to the Do-

† *Præterea inutilis est stipulatio si quis, ad ea qua interrogatus fuerit, non respondeat.* Justin. Instit. l. 3. Tit. 20. Sect. 5.

ctrine of the Church, and then put them to the Godfather, he must change his Answer, and say, *All these I do not steadfastly believe*, and † then the Priest could proceed no farther till better Sureties are found, or he must use the Office of private Baptism. But are not actions, at least solemn ones, as significant as words; and do not Mens

Practices as certainly discover their Sense as their Declarations.

However, if his *Faith* may pass unquestion'd, it is certain, he can give no *Security* for the performance of the third Condition, *Obedience to all God's Commandments.* And not to repeat the absurdity that arises from the different Senses in which the question is put, and the answer made, the contradiction of which is more evident with respect to some of the *Commandments*, than any of the *Articles of Faith*, not to repeat this, I say, barely to relate this procedure, is enough to condemn it. Here a Priest admits one a *Surety*, for another's obedience to God's Commandments, who lives himself in an avow'd violation of several of them; of the fifth, which according to our Church's Interpretation enjoins submission to our Spiritual Pastors; and all those other Commands of the Gospel which require Christians to live in *Unity, to avoid Divisions; to obey them that have the Rule over them in the Lord, &c.* He takes however, *Security* that the Child shall be subject to his spiritual Pastors, from a Person who disowns them. That he shall be educated in the unity of the Church, and the right Communion,

from



from one, who by the Principles of his own Practice is engag'd to educate him in the wrong. Doth it become a faithful Steward of the Mysteries of Christ, to dispense them with so little caution, and to take such, which is no security, that they shall not be abused?

3dly. *Godfathers and Godmothers* are appointed by the Church, to take care of the Childs Instruction and Education in the Christian Religion, according to the obligation of his Baptismal Vow. The Author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, who is ancient, though not *Dionysius the Areopagite*, saith that the Child is deliver'd to the Godfather as † to a Master or Instructor in Divine things.

† *αρχιδάτῃ Θεῷ πατρί γυνῶ.* Eccl. Hierar. c. 7.

And our holy Mother the Church, in her \* Exhortation to the Godfather and Godmother, solemnly commits the Baptized Child to their charge and instruction. It is your parts and duties to see that this Infant be taught as soon as he shall be able to learn what a solemn Vow, Promise and Profession he hath here made by you. And that he may know these things the better, ye shall call upon him to hear Sermons, and chiefly ye shall provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Soul's Health, &c. Ye are to take care that this Child

\* See the Exhortation in close of the Office of baptism. St. Austin. Sermon de Temp. 115. *Ideo tam illos qui de vobis nati sunt, quam illos quos de fonte excipistis, castigate atq; corrigit, ut caste, ut iuste, ut sobrie vivant.*

Synod Moguntin. can. 47. *Jubentur compadres Spirituales filios suos Catholicè instruere.*

be brought to the Bishop to be confirm'd by him, &c. Not to ask here whose Sermons the Priest directs them to, and whose Sermons he believes the Godfathers will call upon him to hear: By what Bishop the one would have him Confirm'd: And to what Bishop the other will carry him, or whether to any: Not to put such questions as these. It is certain in the mean time, that the Church here commits the Child to the Godfather and Godmother, with a charge that he learn the fore-mentioned Particulars, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Soul's Health. Now, that he is to be subject to that Authority that Christ hath established in his Church; that he is to adhere to the Communion of the Lawful Governours and Pastors of it; That he is to keep Christian Unity, and avoid Schism, are some of those things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his Soul's Health. But are these things to be learnt in Schism? Or hath the Church appointed Schismatics to be her Childrens Guides to the right Communion? And if she hath not, by what Authority doth her Presbyters commit them to these Instructors?

With respect to these two Conditions of the Baptismal Covenant I might observe, that none that I ever heard of, thought a Heretick fit to be a Godfather to a Child. For what reason? Because he can be no Surety for the Child's Faith: And with as much reason ought he to exclude a Schismatick, because he can be no Surety for the Child's Education in the Right Communion, which is included in the third condition of this Covenant as well as the belief of any Article of Faith is in the second: And therefore to be in Catholic Communion, hath always been held necessary, as well as to profess the Orthodox Faith; and Schism was ever look'd upon to be dangerous to the Souls of Men, as well as Heresie. And

if any Man doubts of this, he might easily be convinced, but for the present let him remember that the Church equally prays to be delivered from both.

*From all false Doctrine, Heresie, and Schism, Good Lord deliver us.*

Before I conclude, I will consider the Reasons that may be given for admitting *Schismaticks* to this Office. 1<sup>st</sup>. They seem to imagine that *Godfathers and Godmothers* in a Christian Country are only a Formality; Or, 2<sup>dly</sup>, If they are more, that the Church hath by no Canon forbid *Schismaticks* to be admitted; And 3<sup>dly</sup>, That sometimes others are not to be got.

As to the first: It is certain *Godfathers and Godmothers* were never instituted as a Formality, but for those great and weighty Ends before mentioned; and if some Parents chuse them as if they were, it is a Presbyter's Duty to correct their Mistake, and not by a criminal compliance to confirm them in it. But for the Ministers of this Sacred Contract, which is made in such obligatory terms, and in so solemn a manner, to look upon it, after all, as a matter of meer Form, is to say, that they egregiously trifle, when they are acting in the most serious manner in the World.

2<sup>dly</sup>. *Godfathers and Godmothers* are not required by our Church only, but it is a Practice, which hath the consent of the whole

† Lib. de bapt. Cap. c. 6. § 18.

Church of God in all Ages. We find them in † *Tertullian* who lived in part of the Age next to the Apostles, and wrote in the beginning of the following, and he speaks of them in a manner that shews the practice was general then: and if it was general so early, and hath the universal consent of the Church in all succeeding Ages, it may very well be resolved into an Apostolical Tradition, according

\* *Quod universa tenet Ecclesia, nec conciliis constitutum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi Autoritate Apostolica, traditum rectissime creditur.*

to the known Rule of St. *Austin*. \* *What is held by the Universal Church, and hath not been established by Councils, but hath been always retain'd, is most justly esteem'd to have been deliver'd by Apostolical Authority.*

As to that part of the Argument that would take off the necessity of *Godfathers and Godmothers*, because we do not live amongst *Heathens*, I shall only say, That whilst we live amongst *Deists, Hereticks, and Schismaticks*, the Church hath but too great reason to require Security for those she Baptizes. Nay, were all Men Christians, and were all Christians of one Faith and one Communion, as long as there is so great danger from those constant Enemies, *the Flesh, the World, and the Devil*, which are renounc'd in Baptism, and is the first condition of it, she hath still reason enough to require *Sureties* to preserve the Child from those fatal Enemies, and secure, as much as in them lies, his Christian and Vertuous Education.

Nor is the *Surety's Duty* superseded by the *Parents Care*, it is of good use, even where the Parents discharge their Duty: But because *That* is still contingent, *This Provision* will be always necessary against the Death, or long Absence, the Apostacy, or negligence of Parents. And though, I doubt not but great numbers owe their Christian Knowledge and Vertue, next the Grace of God, to their *Surety's Care* of their Education; yet if but one Person hath



hath been secur'd thereby, so invaluable is the Salvation of one Soul; it was a happy institution, and worth the observance of so many Ages.

3dly. To suppose that *Sureties* in Baptism are only a *Formality*, is to give the *Anabaptists* a greater advantage than their Cause could ever have afforded them. For their chief objection against the *Baptism of Infants*, is, that they cannot perform the Conditions, &c. Which objection is therefore propos'd in these questions of our Catechism; *Why then are Infants baptiz'd when by reason of their tender Age they cannot perform the Conditions required of Persons, that come to be Baptiz'd?* Which the Church answers; *Because they promise them by their Sureties, which Promise when they come to Age, themselves are bound to perform.* But now, to say that *Sureties* are only a *Formality* (and I may add, to admit *Schismatics* for *Sureties*) destroys the Church's Answer, and leaves *Infant-baptism* under the force of the Adversary's Objection. Whereas were there a Religious Care taken by Parents in the choice, and by the Ministers of Religion in the admission of *Sureties*; and in consequence of that, a conscientious discharge of the *Sureties* Duties, in seeing that the Child be educated in all Christian Knowledge and Vertue: It would not only justify the Church's Answer, but also be one of the most effectual means to revive Christianity amongst us, to reform in some measure the present, and give us greater hopes of the next Generation.

As to the second Argument. That *Schismatics* are not by any Canon excluded from being *Godfathers and Godmothers*. Supposing this is true; I answer, That if to admit them perverts the design of the Institution, and gives the Church no Security; this is a sufficient bar to their admission, without any positive Prohibition; for, to pervert all the ends of a Law, is much more than barely to clash with the Letter of it. Besides, were it a good Argument that *Schismatics* might be admitted because they are not excluded by name, it would follow, that *Hereticks* might be admitted, for they are not particularly excluded; nay, *Jews and Mahometans* too, for neither are they excluded by name; so that this Argument proves too much, and therefore proves nothing at all. Indeed, some things are not forbidden by Laws, because they are so absurd in themselves, that it was never suppos'd they would be practis'd.

But, 2dly. If the Letter of the Canon doth not, the constant Practice of the Church, which hath the force of a Law, and is ever the best Interpreter of her Laws, hath excluded them: For this holds in the Christian as well as the civil Society, where *Use is sufficient* (as we are taught in *Justinian's Institutions*) to introduce a Law without Writing for continued Customs, approved by the consent of those that use them, have the force of Laws. \* And we have the reason of it in those words of the great Lawyer *Julian*. † *Where is the difference whether the Community declares its will by Suffrages, or by Facts?* And if the universal Practice of a Society hath so great force as to become a Law, its Authority is undisputable in the Interpretation of a Law, especially when

\* Lib. 1. Tit. 2. c. 9. *Sine scripto jus venit, quod usus approbavit, nam diuturni mo. es consensu uentium comprobati, legem imitantur.*

† *Quid interest suffragio populus voluntatem suam declarer, an rebus ipsis &c.*

factis. Upon which *Hiraldus*, who quotes him, saith, *Qui igitur legem condere, idem & consuetudinem qua pro lege custodiretur, inducere.* Hirald. Digres. l. 2.

that interpretation is founded on the reason of it. *We have no such custom, nor the Churches of God,* was thought by the Apostle, a sufficient answer to the *Contentious*. I need not spend time here to prove that it was not the custom of the ancient Church ever to admit *Schismatics* for *Sureties*. He must be a very great stranger to her Discipline, and her treatment of *Schismatics*, that imagines she ever did, and will find his mistake, when he seeks for any Instance of it.

But 3<sup>dly</sup>, To come to our own Church. It seems evident that she designs even by her Canons to exclude them, and to admit no *Godfathers*, or *Godmothers* but those who are in full Communion with her. The 29<sup>th</sup> Canon saith, 'None shall be admitted *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* who have not been partakers of the Holy Communion: The reason of which Canon I take to be, that the Church may be assured that those who undertake this Charge be of competent understanding in the Christian Religion, and in full Communion with her. And by the next Canon but one before that, she repels all *Schismatics* from the Table of the Lord. By the 29<sup>th</sup> Canon then, none who are not capable of the Holy Communion are capable of being *Godfathers* or *Godmothers*: But by the 27<sup>th</sup> Canon, no *Schismatics* are capable of the Holy Communion; therefore no *Schismatics* are capable of being *Godfathers* or *Godmothers*.

As for the last Argument, that, when other *Sureties* cannot be got, they must take *Schismatics* or they cannot Baptize the Child. It is certain that Baptism must not be delayed long; the Church doth not allow it, the hazard of the Child will not permit it. But must they therefore take *Schismatics* for *Sureties*? I answer, No. For, this is a case which can never happen but in such exigences, as are caused by Voyages, War, Pestilence, or Persecution. And then they must Baptize with two, or with one, if no more can be got, which hath been sometimes anciently practiced. But what if none can be procured? It is a case of necessity, and the Church hath provided the Office of Private Baptism for it. I conclude with that excellent Petition of our Liturgy.

Give Grace, O Heavenly Father, to all Bishops and Curates, that they may both by their Life and Doctrine set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy Holy Sacraments. Amen.



## P O S T S C R I P T.

**T**H O' the *Priest's Duty* was only concern'd in the Question, yet from what hath been said, it appears, that it must be unlawful for a *Schismatick* to undertake this *Charge*, as well as for the Priest to admit him; and all that I need say more, is, that, since the *Sureties enter into a Contract with God*, † and since all Contracts are to be taken in the sense of those, who have a right to make the terms of them, this must be unjustifiable for Persons of a separate Communion, whether they intend to perform it or no; whether they answer in the sense of the Church, or not: If they do not, they equivocate when they are entering into a Contract with God; which is an affront to his Truth and Omniscience; if they do answer in the Sense of the Church, it is an affront to his Justice and Holiness, to suppose that they may engage themselves to him to Educate a Child in a way, which according to their Principles is sinful, and if they are Men of *no Principles*, they are not concern'd in this question. nor any other, where Religion is concern'd.

I shall add one word to the *Parents*, who are the source of this disorder, and whose part is as unaccountable as any. For, by chusing *Schismaticks Sureties* for their Children, they establish a right to Educate them opposite to their own. - The *Parents Right* is founded in Nature, and the *Sureties* in the Institution of their Office, and both ought to concur in the Education of the Child; but in this case they must unavoidably interfere. The *Parents* are under the strictest obligations to train up their Child in Christian Knowledge and Practice, and to secure him from Error and Schism: But to chuse *Godfathers or Godmothers* in Schism, is not only to expose him to the same danger, but also to give them a right to seduce him, and a right that may possibly defeat their own, whenever the Schism happens to be abetted, and the Catholick Communion to fall under Persecution.

But if they have not so much Zeal, to take the advantage while the *Parents* live, yet, after their death the Children's Religion falls of course under their Care and Direction. It is possibly then one of the greatest Comforts of the *Parents* that they die in the Communion of the Church, but what a severe allay will it be to that Joy, to consider that their Children are in danger of losing that Communion, and which add new weight to their grief, in danger by their irregular act. Thus they who under God are the Authors of their Being, and should be of their Happiness, become Authors of their greatest Misfortune. And if Negligence

† *Agnoscant se fidejussores esse ipsorum, pro ipsis enim, respondent, quod abrenuncient, Diabolo, Pompis, & Operibus ejus, & ideo tam illi, qui excipiant, quam qui excipiuntur, id est, tam Patres quam filii, Patrum, quod cum Christo in Baptismi Sacramento conscribunt custodire contendunt. August. Sermon de Temp. 215.*

and mere Omission are great faults in Parents in the Education of their Children; what is it to lay Snares, and prepare Temptations for them? Indeed this is not what they design, or desire, but it is the tendency of what they do, and may prove the event of it.

Do they act thus in Temporal Matters? Do they ever choose those Trustees for their Estates, and Guardians of their Children, who by Principle or Interest are engaged to keep them out of Possession. The Folly is the same in both, but the Fault and the Consequences incomparably worse in the present case.

13. Tho' y<sup>e</sup> Preceding observations do chiefly relate to y<sup>e</sup> Case of admitting Schismatics to stand Godfathers &c. Yet they may be as well apply'd, w<sup>th</sup> a small alteration, to another Case; and y<sup>e</sup> is, of Catholics standing to Schismatics. For if Schismatics are not allow'd to be Godfathers, certainly it can't be lawfull to stand to Schismatics. How, for instance can any man present a Child to be admitted into a Society w<sup>ch</sup> he knows to be an Unlawfull one? How can he offer him to be Baptiz'd by a Priest who he knows has no Authority to perform y<sup>e</sup> Office? How can he promise for y<sup>e</sup> Child's Faith, whose own Faith is different from y<sup>e</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Minister who asked y<sup>e</sup> Question? Or be a Surety for y<sup>e</sup> Child's Obedience when he disowns some part of y<sup>e</sup> Obedience w<sup>ch</sup> he is asked to be a Surety for? This must be no better than Equivocation, when y<sup>e</sup> Question is asked in one sense & answered in another. But Lastly y<sup>e</sup> Sureties are charged to call upon y<sup>e</sup> Infant, when his age will allow it, to hear Sermons & to learn all things w<sup>ch</sup> a Christian ought to believe, & know to his Soul's health; And to take care he be brought to y<sup>e</sup> Bp. But doubtless y<sup>e</sup> Priest means not y<sup>e</sup> same Persons Sermons as y<sup>e</sup> other intends by his promise; The Minister directs them to one; & y<sup>e</sup> Godfather de- signs another: The Priest speaks of one Bp. & y<sup>e</sup> Godfather promises another: W<sup>ch</sup> makes it impracticable to stand for those of Different